

# The half-dollar leads off the bicentennial design parade

By Roger Boye

THE HALF-DOLLAR will be the first coin to circulate with the new bicentennial reverse design, the United States Mint has announced.

The coin will be distributed beginning July 7. The bicentennial quarter will begin circulating in mid-August, and the bicentennial dollar coin in late 1975.

All coins with the bicentennial reverse designs will carry the twin date, 1776-1976. The obverse designs [Washington on the quarter, Kennedy on the half-dollar, and Eisenhower on the dollar] will remain the same.

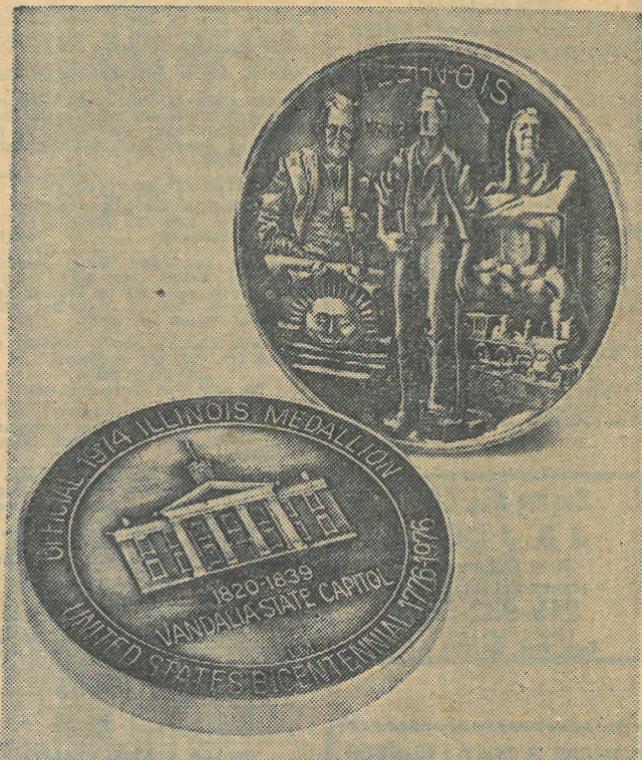
Because the Mint is busy producing the new bicentennial coins, it will make no quarter, half-dollar or dollar coins dated 1975. This will create a "gap" in the consecutive dating of quarters for the first time since 1933, and in half-dollars for the first time since 1932.

The Mint is producing cents, nickels, and dimes with the 1975 date, however. Coins of these three denominations will carry no special bicentennial designs.

In addition, the Mint has announced that 1975 dimes minted in San Francisco for circulation will not carry the identifying "S" mint mark. Thus, dimes minted in San Francisco this year will look identical to dimes produced in Philadelphia, since Philadelphia-minted coins do not carry mint marks.

The hoarding of 1974-S cents last year contributed to a cent shortage. By eliminating the "S" mint mark from 1975 dimes produced for circulation, the Mint hopes to avoid additional hoarding of coins identified as made in San Francisco.

No cents will be minted in San Francisco this year.



Illinois bicentennial medallion

THE SECOND of four Illinois Bicentennial Commission medals is still being sold by the Lincoln Mint.

Deborah Hobbs, 18, of Bellvidere, designed the obverse side of the medal which includes a depiction of Abraham Lincoln as a rail splitter. At his left is Ulysses S. Grant, whose home is preserved at Galena, and a sunstone from the Mormon temple at Nauvoo. On the right is the Indian Blackhawk and a steam engine. The restored Vandalia Statehouse is on the reverse.

The third medal in the series will be issued later this year, and the last medal in 1976. The first medal, issued in 1973, depicts the first state capitol in Kaskaskia.

Sterling silver specimens of the first issue are \$12.50, and the second issue, \$15.

Bronze medals of the first series are \$3.50, and \$4 for the second series. They may be ordered from the Lincoln Mint, One S. Wacker Dr., Chicago, Ill. 60606.

● Q.—In checking dates of my Mercury dimes [minted from 1916 to 1945], I find two that do not have dates from the Denver Mint, 1923 and 1930. What would an error collector pay for such coins?—H. E., Plano, Ill.

A.—R. S. Yeoman's "A Guide Book of U.S. Coins" says simply: "Dimes dated 1923-D and 1930-D are counterfeit." Another reference book says of the 1923-D dime: "Several known to exist. A controversial piece considered a product of foreign origin."

In 1923 and 1930, the United States government minted dimes in Philadelphia and San Francisco only.